The Kings Maieſties Letters Pattents to Sir

William Erskin and *Iohn Meldrum*, for the Lights at Winterton.

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IAMES by the grace of God King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland Defender of the faith &c.

To all to whom theſe preſents ſhall come, greeting. Whereas we haue bin lately informed, that the Seas neere and about the parts of Wintertonneſſe in our County of Norffolke are of great danger and perill for paſſing of Ships ſayling into the North Coaſt in darke and foule nights, by reaſon of a Sand lying in length from the maine Land two furlongs or there abouts, vpon the which of late yeares many great loſſes haue happened to our Subiects ſayling neere the ſame Coaſt, as well by the lamentable wracke of diuers Ships there as by the loſſe of many of our Subiects their liues and goods, which haue beene occaſioned by the want of Light-howſes and Lights that might haue beene prouided and ſet vp, at or neere the ſaid Neſſe for direction of Saylers trading or paſſing to and fro thoſe parts which by the helpe of ſuch Light-houſes and Lights might haue well bin ſaued and preuented. And that for the ſeaping and preuenting of the dangers of thoſe parts for the time to come, it is very conuenient and neceſſarie that Light-howſes ſhould be there erected with Lights therein continually burning, and maintained in the night time, for the direction and ſafe conduct of Shippes paſſing by or alongſt the ſaid Coaſt in the night time in darke and fowle nights, and that almoſt all the Maſters and owners of Shipping, trading to our Towne of Newcaſtle for Coales, Fiſhermen and other Maiſters and Owners of other Shipping trading vpon the ſaid North Coaſt, haue heretofore greatly deſired the erection of Light-howſes and Lights there to be ſet vp and maintained, and haue offered to contribute for, and towards the erection and continuall maintenance of the ſame, as by an inquiſition or certificate taken at the Cittie of Norwich in the County of Norffolke the eight day of Ianuarie laſt paſt before Iohn Corbet, Iohn Smith, Owen Sheppard, and Roger Godſalue, Eſquires: our Commiſſioners by vertue of Our Commiſſion vnder our great Seale of England, bearing date at Weſtminſter the ſixteenth day of December laſt paſt, vnto them and others directed by the oathes of ſundry good and lawfull men of our Townes of great Yarmouth and Winterton in the ſaid County, and returned into and remaining of record in our Court of Chancery: amongſt other things more at large it doth and may more appeare.

Wee therefore out of our Princely office and care intending hereafter to prouide for as well the ſafety of the liues and goods of our Subiects and others as of the ſhipping of our Kingdomes, (being a principall honour and ſtrength of the ſame) and vnwilling that our louing Subiects and others paſſing by the ſaid North Coaſt ſhould vndergoe and continue ſtill vnder the danger and hazard of the ſaid perilous Sands whereunto by woefull experience they haue heretofore beene too much ſubiect.

And hauing beene enformed by our learned Councell that the erection and maintenance of ſuch Light-houſes and Lights in places needfull for the ſafetie of our ſubiects, is a right and power remaining in vs notwithſtanding the power or authoritie heretofore giuen by the ſtatute made in the eight yeare of the Raigne of our late deare Siſter Queene Elizabeth to the Maiſter, Wardens, and Aſſiſtants of the Trinitie-houſe of Debtford Strond for erecting of Beacons, Signes, and Sea-markes, haue thought fit and neceſſarie, and by theſe preſents wee doe for vs, our Heires and ſucceſſors, will, ordaine and appoynt that ſome one or more conuenient Light-houſe or Light houſes ſhall be erected, made and ſet vp, at or neere ſuch fit and conuenient place or places at or within the ſpace of two miles of Wintertõ aforeſaid as by the perſons hereafter by vs named and authorized in that behalfe, their Executors, Adminiſtrators or Aſſignes, their ſubſtitute or ſubſtitutes, or ſome or one of them ſhal be thought meete and neceſſarie from time to time, and that continually in the night ſeaſon in darke and foule nights ſufficient lights ſhall therein by the perſons hereafter named, their Executors or Aſſignes, ſubſtitute or ſubſtitutes, or ſome or one of them, and at their proper coſts and charges from time to time be kept and maintained for the direction, condition, and preſeruation of Ships, Hoyes, Barkes, Fiſhermen or other veſſells whatſoeuer, which ſhall ſaile or paſſe by or alongſt the ſaid North Coaſt, and that as well the ſaid Light-houſe or Light-houſes which ſhall hereafter be by them ſo built and erected, ſhall or may from time to time by the ſaid perſons hereafter by vs named and appoynted, their Executors, Adminiſtrators, or Aſſignes, ſubſtitute or ſubſtitutes be altered, renewed, remoued, and changed as by the accidents and mouable nature of ſands and chanels at or neere Wintertonneſſe aforeſaid ſhal or may require for the ſafer conduction and guiding of Saylers, Ships, Fiſher-barkes, and other veſſells whatſoeuer, paſſing or repaſſing from Port to Port, by or alongſt the ſaid Coaſt as well by night as by day.

And for as much as the erection, reparation, remooving, changing, and continuall mainteining of the ſaid Light-houſes & Lights in the ſame there will from time to time require a great and continuall charge for the ſupportation and maintenance of the ſame. Wee will, ordaine, and appoint for vs our Heyres and ſucceſſors that there ſhall be collected and taken of and for euery Shippe, Hoy, Barke, Fiſherman, or other veſſell whatſoeuer that ſhall paſſe from Port to Port by or alongſt the ſaid North Coaſt a duty or payment of one penny vpon the Tunne according to the burthen of the ſaid Shipe, Hoy, Barke or veſſell, in the whole voyage outward and inward, (that is to ſay) one halfe penny vpon euery Tunne for the ſaid whole voyage outward and inward of and from the Maiſters or owners of ſuch Shippes, Barkes, Hoyes, and veſſells, and one other halfe penny vpon euery Tunne as aforeſaid of and from the Merchants or owners of the goods in the ſaid Shippes, Barkes, Hoyes, or veſſells for the time being, which ſaid dutie or payment of one penny to be paied vpon euery Tunne as aforeſaid wee will ſhall be deliuered and paied to the hands of ſuch officer and officers or other perſon or perſons as the perſons hereafter named, or either of either of them, their, or either of their Executors, Adminiſtrators, or Aſſignes, or any of them ſhall nominate, depute and appoint in any our cuſtome-houſes, to receiue and take the ſame by the Maſters and owners of the Shippes, Hoyes, Barkes, veſſells, for the time being, who ſhall and may lawfully demaund

receiue, and take the moietie, or one halfe thereof, according to the true meaning of this our graunt of and from the Marchants and owners of the goods in the Shippes, Hoyes, Barkes and vessells, from time to time, according to the quantitie of the goods and Marchandizes wherewith the said Shippes, Hoyes, Barkes or vessells shall be fraught or laden.

And that the said persons hereafter named, their or either of their Executors, Administrators or Assignes, substitute or substitutes one or more of them shall or may likewise lawfully demaund, receiue and take of euery Shippe, Hoye, Barke, Fisherman or vessell being the Shippe, Hoye, Barke or vessell of any Aliene, Denizen or stranger, not being our naturall borne Subiects, that shall happen to sayle, or passe from Port to Port, by or alongst the said North Coast, the like dutie of one pennie upon the Tunne, in the voyage outward and inward, as aforesaid, which we will and ordaine, for vs, our Heyres, and Successors, shall be collected and taken by the persons hereafter named, their Exequctors, Administrators, Debutis, or Assignes, at or in the Port, Harbour, Creeke, or Roade within any part of our Dominions where the said Shippes, Hoyes, Barkes or vessells of any such stranger, shall harbor or put in, although the same Shippe, or vessell shall not there be vnladed or discharged of any the goods or Merchandizes, wherewith it shall be fraught or laden.

And that the same dutie of one pennie vpon the Tunne as aforesaid being once paide, and the receipt thereof being testified by those who shall be appointed to receiue the same, the said Masters and owners of Shippes and other vessells, as well our naturall borne Subiects as strangers, shall be then freed and discharged of and from the payment of the said dutie, in euery or any Port or Ports in which the said Shippes or vessells, shall or may happen or come in euery or any such voyage as aforesaid.

KNOVV YEE therefore that wee as well in consideration of the premises, as for diuers other good causes and considerations vs hereunto mouing of our speciall grace, certaine knowledge and meere motion, haue giuen and graunted, and by these presents for vs, our Heires & Successors, wee doe giue & graunt vnto our trustie & welbeloued seruants Sir VViliam Erskin Knight, and Iohn Meldrum Esquire, their Executors, Administrators and Assignes, as well in regard of the true, faithfull, and acceptable seruice by the said Sir William Erskine & Iohn Meldrum to vs heeretofore done, and as being the first suters vnto vs for the erecting and setting vp of Light-houses at or neer Winterton aforesaide, as also for other good causes and considerations vs thereunto mouing free libertie, licence, power and authoritie, that they or any of them shall and may lawfully make, builde, erect, set vp, remoue, and maintaine, or cause to be made, builded, erected, set vp, remoued and maintained in all such place and places of the said North Coast within the compasse of two miles of the Towne of Winterton in our County of Norfolke as to them shall seeme most fit, needfull and requisite, such and so many conuenient Light-howses, with continuall Lights to be burning in them during all the night time, whereby the said Seafaring men may take notice and be warned of the dangers thereabouts and so be the more able to auoide and escape them, and the said ships and vessells may the better ariue & come into their Ports and Harbors without perill, as to them the said Sir William Erskine and Iohn Meldrum, their Executors, Administrators and Assignes or any of them shall be thought fit, requisite and needfull.

And for the great & continuall charges to be from time to time susteyned & borne in & about the erecting and maintaining of the said Lights and Light-howses, we doe for vs, our Heires, and Successors will, ordaine, giue and graunt to the said Sir VViliam Erskine and Iohn Meldrum, their Executors, Administrators, Deputies and Assignes full power and authoritie, that they and euery of them shall and may lawfully demaunde, receiue, haue and take of, and from the Masters and Owners of Shippes, Hoyes, Barkes, Fishermen, and other Vessells passing or sayling by or alongst the said North Coast one pennie vppon the Tunne according to the burthen of the same Ships or vessels for euery whole voyage inward & outward as aforesaid, to be from time to time answered and payd either in such Port or places where the same Ship or Vessell shall be fraught or laden, or else in such Port or place where the same Ship or Vessell shall be discharged and vnladen as aforesaid. Neuertheless our will and pleasure is that for the erection, reparation, renewing remouing and continuall mayntenance of all or any such Light-house or Light-houses heretofore erected & set vp, or which hereafter shall or may be erected, renued, altered, remoued and mayntained, at or neer Winterton, or within two miles compasse of the same as aforesaid, no other or further dutie or payment to be demaunded or taken of our subiects or others, then the aforesaid dutie or payment of one penny in the Voyage vpon the Tunne outward and inward as aforesaid.

AND WE doe further of our speciall grace, certaine knowledge, & meere motion for vs, our Heires, and successors, giue & grant vnto the said Sir William Erskine and Iohn Meldrum, their executors, administrators and assignes, full power and authoritie that they and euerie of them at their wills and pleasures shall or may lawfully erect, set vp, alter, change, renue and remoue by or at their proper costs and charges, and by and with the aduise and direction of expert and skillfull Seafaringmen, dwelling or trading vpon the aforesaid Coast, such and so many Lights and Light-houses, at or neere Winterton aforesaid; or within the compasse of two miles thereof as aforesaid, as shall be thought fit and as iust occasion or necessitie shall require. To haue, hold, exercise and enioy the said liberties, licences, powers & authorities, & the said dutie or payment of one pennie vpon the Tunne as aforesaid before by these presents giuen and granted and euerie of them vnto the said Sir William Erskine and Iohn Meldrum their Executors, Administrators & Assignes, for & during the full end and tearme of fiftie yeares from the date of these presents fully to be compleate & ended.

AND for asmuch as any other order or course cannot well be taken for the due leauying of the said dutie or payment of one penny vpon the Tunne in the Voyage outward and inward as aforesaid for and towards the effecting and continuance of this so good and necessarie a worke, then by appointing the payment and collection of the same, to be had & made within the Ports, Harbors, Roades and Creekes, vnto the which the said Ships, Barkes, and Vessells shall or doe come and arriue, we doe by these presents for vs, our Heires and Successors, will, ordaine and appoint and also straightly charge, command, and authorise all and euery the Customers, Collectors, Controulers, Receiuers of entries of ships, Water-baylifes & al other the officers whatsoeuer of and concerning the Customes to vs, our Heires & Successors, and all other the Wardens or keepers of any our Hauens and Ports now being, and which from the time hereafter shall be as well in our seuerall Ports of London & New-castle, as in all and euery other the Ports, Harbors, Creekes, Roades, and places within our Realme of England to whome it shall or may appertaine, that they or some of them being first lawfully deputed and appointed by the said persons herein before named, their Executors, Administrators or Assignes, or some of them for the leuying and receiuing the said dutie of one pennie vpon the Tunne as afore said from time to time & at al times hereafter during & the said terme of fiftie yeares before such time as they or any of them shall or may giue any Cocket or other discharge whatsoeuer, or before they shall receiue or take any entry respectiuely of or for any Ship, Barke or Vessell which hereafter shall passe or repasse by or alongst the North Coast aforesaid shall demaund, collect and receiue the said dutie and allowance of one pennie vpon the Tunne in the voiage, outward and inward herein before specified, respectiuely of and for all and euery such Ship, Hoye Barke, or Vessell, belonging to any Merchant, Fisherman, or other person or persons our naturall borne Subiects, Denizens and Strangers as shall sayle and trade from Port to Port by or along the Coast aforesaide, except the Master or Owner of the same Ship, Barke or Vessell shall produce & shew forth a receipt or acquittance of and for the payment of the said dutie vnder the hand and seale of such officer or officers as shall be deputed and appointed by the said persons herein before named, their Executors, Administrators or Assignes in euery or any such Custome-house or place from whence the said Shipe or Vessell shall come testifying the payment and receipt thereof to be there duly had and made.

And that all and euery such Customer, collector, or other officer in our said Custome-houses to be appointed and deputed as afore-, said, shall yeeld and make iust and true accompts and payments, of all and every such collections sum & summes of money, as by him

them or any of them, ſhall be collected or receiued from time to time, vnto the ſaid Sir William Erskine Knight, and Iohn Meldrum their Executors, Adminiſtrators or Aſſignes, to be by them, either or any of them, receiued and reteyned to their owne proper vſe and behoofe, for & in reſpect of their great and continuall charges, to be ſuſteined and borne, in erecting, renewing, altering, remouing and continuall maintaining of the ſaid Light-houſes and Lights, in the night ſeaſon as aforeſaid, without any accompt or other thing therefore, or for any part thereof by them to be made or giuen for the ſame, other then the yearely rent hereby to vs our Heyres and Succeſſors reſerued, yeelding, and paying therefore vnto vs, our Heires and Succeſſors, the yearely rent or ſumme of ſix pounds thirteene ſhillings and foure pence of lawfull money of England, at the receipt of our Exchequer at Weſtminſter, or to our Receiuer or Receiuers, of our Countie of Norffolke for the time being, at the feaſt of the Annunciation of the bleſſed virgine Mary, and at S. Michaell the Arch-Angell, by even and equall proportion, during the ſaid terme, or within thirty dayes next after eyther of the ſaid feaſtes.

And to the end, that the ſaid S VVilliam Erskine and Iohn Mledrum, their Executors, Adminiſtrators and Aſſignes, ſhall and may the better haue & enioye the full force, benifit and effect of this our preſent graunt; and to the intent and purpoſe, that the Maſter, Wardens and Aſſiſtants of the Trinitie Houſe of Debtford Strond aforeſaid, and all others whoſoeuer, may be reſtrayned during the terme of Fiftie yeares aforeſaid, from continuing, reparing, renuing, remouing and mayntayning, any Light-houſe or Light-houſes already erected and ſet vp, ſince March laſt, within the ſpace of two Miles of the Towne of Winterton aforeſaid, and from erecting and ſetting vp during the ſaid terme, any other new Light-houſe or Light-houſes, at or neere the ſaid Towne, or within two miles thereof and of and from the receiuing, hauing or taking, by any wayes, meanes, or pretences whatſoeuer, any collection, contribution, ſumme or ſumes of money whatſoeuer for the ſame, during the ſaid Terme of Fiftie yeares before ſpecified, notwithſtanding any former courſe, taken or had, by, or for the ſaid Maſter, Wardens and Aſſiſtants of the Trinitie houſe of Debtford Strond aforeſaid, for the Light-houſes ſince March laſt by them erected, at or neere VVinterton aforeſaid.

Wee doe by theſe preſents, for vs, our Heires and Succeſſors, authorize, the Lords of our Priuie Councell for the time being, and wee doe alſo ſtraightly charge, require and command all Mayors, Sheriffes, Juſtices of peace, Captaines of our Caſtles, and Forts, Bayliffes and other Officers and Miniſters whatſoeuer, of vs, our Heyres and Succeſſors to whom it doth and ſhall appertaine, that they and euery of them bee from time to time hereafter ayding and aſſiſting vnto the ſaid William Erskin Knight & Iohn Meldrum, their and either of their Executors, Adminiſtrators and Aſſignes, ſubſtitutes, factors and ſeruants, and euery of them, in & concerning the premiſes vpon euery complaint to be made touching or concerning the ſame, according as in Juſtice ſhall be by them or any of them deſired and requeſted in that behalfe, and theſe preſents or the inrolement thereof ſhall be vnto them and euery of them a ſufficient warrant and diſcharge for the doing, performing and executing the ſame.

AND laſtly we doe hereby ſignifie and declare our expreſſe will and pleaſure to be, and we doe for vs, our Heires and Succeſſors, ſtraightly charge and command the ſaid Maiſter, Wardens, and Aſſiſtants of the Trinitie houſe of Debtford-Strond and their ſucceſſors, that they and euerie of them, their factors and ſeruants appoynted by them ſhall and doe immediately from henceforth ſurceaſe and deſiſt as well of and from erecting or ſetting vp of any Light-houſe or Light-houſes at VVinterton aforeſaid, or within two miles compaſſe thereof as aforeſaid, as of and from the continuing or maintaining of any Light or Lights burning in any Light-houſe or Light-houſes ſince March laſt by them there erected or ſet vp, & that they and euery of them ſhall forbeare from henceforth to demande, receiue or take any dutie, payment allowance, or benifit of or from any our ſubiects or others trading or paſſing by or alongſt the ſaid Coaſt, for or in reſpect of the ſame Light-houſe or Light-houſes by or vnder any colour, pretence or pretext, whatſoeuer any Act, Statute, Ordinance, Prouiſion, Charter and Graunt, heretofore had made, enacted, or prouided, or any other cauſe, conſideration, matter, or thing, to the contrarie thereof in any wiſe, notwithſtanding, & that vpon the paine and perill of incurring our high and heauie diſpleaſure for their contempt or neglect of this our royall will and commandement herein ſo expreſſly declared in this behalfe, although expreſſe mention of the true yearely value or certainty of the premiſes or of any of them, or of any other gift or graunt by vs or any of our Progenitors or Predeceſſors to the aforeſaid Sir William Erskine and Iohn Meldrum or either of them before theſe times made in theſe preſents, is not made, or any Statute, Act, Ordinance, Prouiſion, Proclamation or Reſtraint heretofore had made, ſet forth, ordained or prouided or any other matter, cauſe or thing whatſoeuer to the contrarie in any wiſe notwithſtanding.

In witneſſe whereof we haue cauſed theſe our Letters to be made Patents, witneſs our ſelfe at Weſtminſter the 18 day of Feb. in our 15 yeare of our Raigne of England, France and Ireland and of Scotland the 51.

God ſaue the King.